(c) the comparative set up obtaining in some other countries like Britain, USA etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) The Commissioners of Railway Safety, whose one of the many functions is to conduct inquiries into serious rail accidents, are entitled to get infrastructure support *viz.* accommodation, transport, etc. from the Ministry of Railways. They are, however, independent of the Ministry of Railways as their budget, appointment, promotion, pay & allowances etc. are under the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The facilities being provided by the Railways are as per the service conditions agreed by the Ministry of Railways. They function independently and impartially in conducting accident inquiries and finalising their reports.

The accident inquiry reports are finally submitted to the Ministry of Railways, as the Railway Board is the safety controlling authority and they examine and implement the accepted recommendations, made by the Commissioners.

(b) Railway Safety Review Committee (1998) has also supported the independent nature and status of the Commission of Railway Safety.

(c) In USA, National Transport Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent Federal agency charged with investigation in every major accident of all transportation sectors. In Britain, the functions of Railway Safety Inspectorate called the "Her Majesty's Safety Inspectorate" are broadly similar to that of Commission of Railway Safety in India.

Bifurcation and creating new railway zones

2467. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Supreme Court has directed to place before it, the basis of bifurcation and creating of seven new Railway Zones; and

(b) the basis of splitting of the existing zones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) (a) Supreme Court had directed to place before it the material on the basis of which the Cabinet took the decision for creation of seven new zones.

(b) New zones are created on the basis of their workload, accessibility and other administrative/operational requirements.

Misconduct of Railway officials at Rajdhani accident site

2468. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was gross misconduct by the Railway officials at the accident site of Howrah—Delhi Rajdhani;

(b) whether the railway officials refused to hand over dead bodies to the relatives of the deceased at some particular stage, even after they were identified and post mortems were over; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken by Government against the officials who mistreated people, at the time of such crisis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Karnataka proposal on re-organisation of Railway Zones

2469. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal of Karnataka Government regarding re-organisation of Railway Divisions and Zones is still pending with Government; if so, the details thereof;

(b) the reasons for the delay in this regard; and

(c) by when the proposal is likely to be considered by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (c) Since the issue of notifications for the new Zones and Divisions by the Ministry of Railways, on 14.6.02 and 4.7.02, several State Governments including the Karnataka Government have sent proposals for new Zones or Divisions and also for changes in their jurisdictions. The Karnataka Government has proposed for Guntakal Division to be a part of South Western Railway, as also